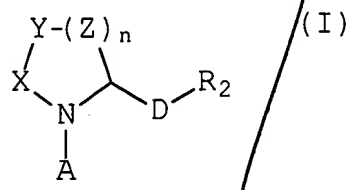
Please amend claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 11, 21, and 25 as follows:

1. (Amended) A compound of formula (I):



(I)

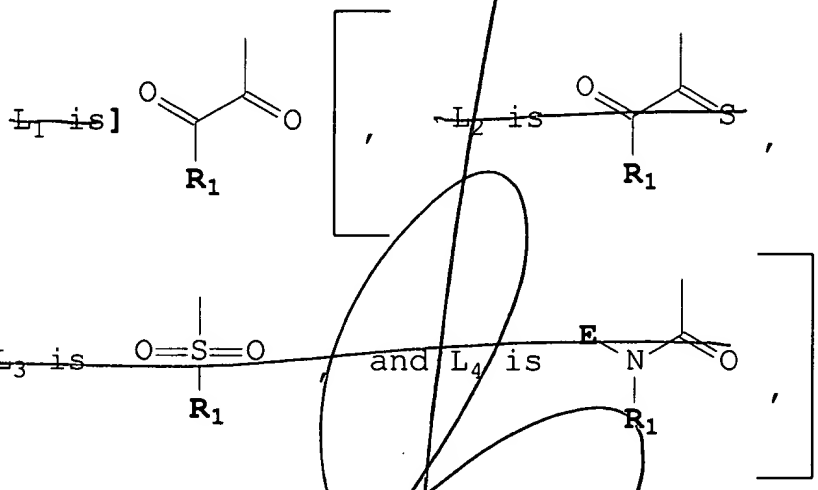
where

X, Y, and Z are independently selected from the group consisting of C, O, S, or N, provided that X, Y, and Z are not all C;

n is 1[~~-3~~];

A is [~~selected from the group consisting of L_1, L_2, L_3, or L_4,~~

~~where~~



~~L_1 is~~] , ~~L_2 is~~ , ~~L_3 is~~ , and L_4 is ,]

R_1 [~~and E are independently~~] is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, C_1-C_9 straight or branched chain alkyl or alkenyl, C_2-C_9 straight or branched chain alkenyl, aryl, heteroaryl, carbocycle, and heterocycle;

D is selected from the group consisting of a bond, and C_1-C_{10}

straight or branched chain [~~alkyl, ethylene, and butylene~~] alkylenyl;

R_2 is a carboxylic acid or a carboxylic acid isostere;

wherein said alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, aryl, heteroaryl, carbocycle, heterocycle, or carboxylic acid isostere is optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from R^3, where R^3 is hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, haloalkyl, thiocarbonyl, alkoxy, alkenoxy, alkylaryloxy, aryloxy, arylalkyloxy, cyano, nitro, imino, alkylamino, aminoalkyl, sulfhydryl, thioalkyl, alkylthio, sulfonyl, C_1-C_6 straight or branched chain alkyl, C_2-C_6 straight or branched chain alkenyl or alkynyl, aryl, heteroaryl, carbocycle, heterocycle, or CO_2R^4 where R^4 is hydrogen or C_1-C_9 straight or branched chain alkyl or alkenyl;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, [~~ester,~~] or solvate thereof;

provided that:

R_1 is not substituted with both hydroxy and oxygen to form carboxy, or R_1 is not substituted with both alkoxy and oxygen to form alkoxycarbonyl, or R_1 is not substituted with both amine and oxygen to form amide; and

further provided that:

when [~~A is L_1 or L_2, and~~] D is a bond,

then R_2 is not COOH, or an amide;

[~~further provided that:~~

when A is L_1, and R_1 is methyl, and D is a bond,

then R_2 is not COOH;

further provided that:

when A is L_3, and R_1 is phenyl, methylphenyl, phenylmethyl, substituted or unsubstituted phenoxyphenyl, substituted naphthyl, or methoxyphenyl, and D is a bond,

then R_2 is not COOH or an amide;

further provided that:

when A is L_3, and R_1 is phenyl, and D is a bond,

then R_2 is not thiophenyl;

further provided that:

when A is L_3, and R_1 is phenyl, and D is oxyethyl,

then R_2 is not an amide;

further provided that:

when A is L_3, and R_1 is substituted isoquinoline, and D is butyl,

then R_1 is not an amide;

further provided that:

when A is L_3 or L_4, and R_1 is unsubstituted or substituted phenyl, and D is C_1-C_3 alkyl or alkenyl,

then R_2 is not COOH, OH, or an amide;

further provided that:

when A is L_4, and R_1 is phenyl, halo-substituted phenyl, dimethylphenyl, substituted butyl, or methylphenyl, and D is a

bond,

then R_2 is not COOH;

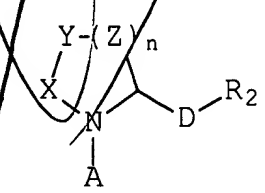
further provided that:

when A is L_4, and R_1 is cyano-substituted alkyl, and D is a bond, then R_2 is not an amide].

Claim 2, page 66, line 16, after "combination of CH_2," and before "O, S, or N", please insert --C, CH,--.

5. (Amended) The compounds of claim 1, [(2S)-1-(phenylmethyl) carbamoyl-2-hydroxymethyl (4-thiazolidine); (2S)-1-(1,1-dimethylpropyl)carbamoyl-2-(4-thiazolidine)tetrazole; (2S)-1-(phenylmethyl) carbamoyl-2-(4-thiazolidine) carbonitrile; (2S)-1-(1,1-dimethylpropyl)carbamoyl-2-(4-thiazolidine)tetrazole;] 3-(3,3-dimethyl-2-oxopentanoyl)-1,3-oxazolidine-4-carboxylic acid; and (2S)-1-(3,3-dimethyl 1,2-dioxopropyl)-2-(3-thiazolidine)carboxylic acid.

7. (Amended) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 6, wherein the carboxylic acid or carboxylic acid isostere of an N-heterocyclic ring compound having two or more heteroatoms in the ring comprises a compound of formula (I):



(I)

where

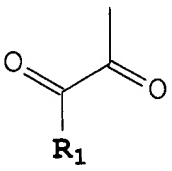
X, Y, and Z are independently selected from the group consisting of C, O, S, or N, provided that X, Y, and Z are not all C;

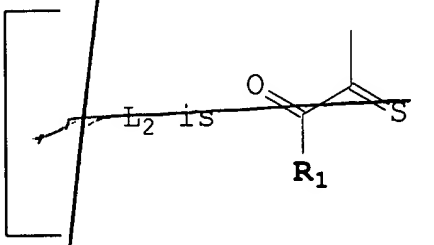
n is 1[~~-3~~];

A is [~~selected from the group consisting of L_1, L_2, L_3, or L_4,~~

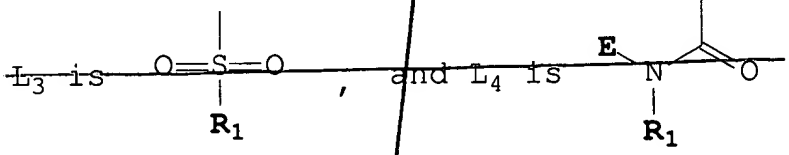
where

~~L_1 is~~]





~~L_3 is~~



R_1 [~~and E are independently~~] ~~is~~ selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, C_1-C_9 straight or branched chain alkyl or alkenyl, C_2-C_9 straight or branched chain alkenyl, aryl, heteroaryl, carbocycle, and heterocycle;

D is selected from the group consisting of a bond, and C_1-C_{10} straight or branched chain [~~alkyl, ethylene, and butylene~~] alkylenyl;

R_2 is a carboxylic acid or a carboxylic acid isostere;

wherein said alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, aryl, heteroaryl, carbocycle, or heterocycle is optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from R^3, where

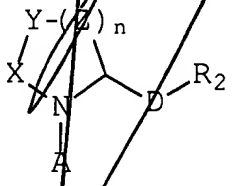
R^3 is hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, haloalkyl, thiocarbonyl, alkoxy,

alkenoxy, alkylaryloxy, aryloxy, arylalkyloxy, cyano, nitro, imino, alkylamino, aminoalkyl, sulfhydryl, thioalkyl, alkylthio, sulfonyl, C_1-C_6 straight or branched chain alkyl, C_2-C_6 straight or branched chain alkenyl or alkynyl, aryl, heteroaryl, carbocycle, heterocycle, or CO_2R^4 where R^4 is hydrogen or C_1-C_9 straight or branched chain alkyl or alkenyl;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, [~~ester,~~] or solvate thereof.

11. (Amended) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 7, wherein the carboxylic acid or carboxylic acid isostere of an N-heterocyclic ring compound having two or more heteroatoms in the ring is selected from the group consisting of compounds 146-165, 186-202, 366-385, 406-422, [1-442,] compound L, and compound M.

21. (Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the carboxylic acid or carboxylic acid isostere of an N-heterocyclic ring compound having two or more heteroatoms in the ring comprises a compound of formula (I):



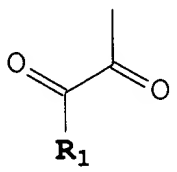
(I)

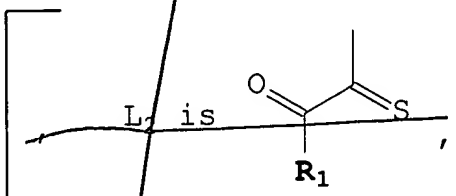
where

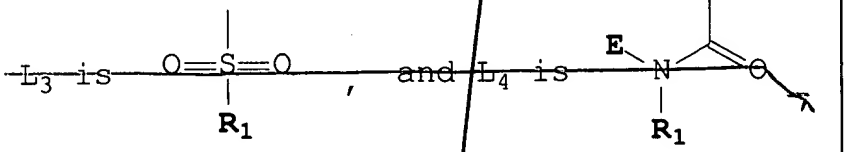
X, Y, and Z are independently selected from the group consisting of C, O, S, or N, provided that X, Y, and Z are not all C;

n is 1[-3];

A is ~~[selected from the group consisting of L_1, L_2, L_3, or L_4, where~~

~~L_1 is]~~ 





R_1 ~~[and E are independently]~~ is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, C_1-C_9 straight or branched chain alkyl or alkenyl, C_2-C_9 straight or branched chain alkenyl, aryl, heteroaryl, carbocycle, and heterocycle;

D is selected from the group consisting of a bond, and C_1-C_{10} straight or branched chain ~~[alkyl, ethylene, and butylene]~~ alkylenyl;

R_2 is a carboxylic acid or a carboxylic acid isostere;

wherein said alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, aryl, heteroaryl, carbocycle, or heterocycle is optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from R^3, where

R^3 is hydrogen, hydroxy, halo, haloalkyl, thiocarbonyl, alkoxy, alkenoxy, alkylaryloxy, aryloxy, arylalkyloxy, cyano, nitro, imino, alkylamino, aminoalkyl, sulfhydryl, thioalkyl, alkylthio, sulfonyl, C_1-C_6 straight or branched chain alkyl, C_2-C_6 straight or branched